Approved For Release 2008/09/22 : CIA-RDP80-00810A007700440009-3

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY	USSR (Latvian SSR)	REPORT	25X1
SUBJECT	Naval Craft and Installations in Lepaya, Kaliningrad, and Ventspils	DATE DISTR.	16 SEP 1953
		NO. OF PAGES	6
DATE OF INFO.		REQUIREMENT NO.	25X1
PLACE ACQUIRED		REFERENCES	25X1
DATE ACQUIRED			

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Cruisers ORDZHONIKIDZE and SVERDLOV

1. The ORDZHONIKIDZE had a crew of about 800.

The ORDZHONIKIDZE was not in dry dock while in Lepaya; the SVERDLOV had been in dry dock. Work carried out on the ORDZHONIKIDZE included taking on board 1.5 m x 1.5 m x 5 mm asbestos plates. These were fitted inside the vessel in large quantities by dockyard workmen. A quantity of silver paper, about one mm thick, was also taken on board in boxes approximately 2 m x 2 m x 40 cm. 25X1

2. It was usual for an oil barge to come alongside and run pipes into the ship. The barge would lie approximately abreast of the forward turrets. At one time, oil barges came alongside the ship for two days. There were various types of barges, but the one particularly remembered was about three-quarters of the length of the submarine tender SMOLNYY. The ORDZHONIKIDZE took on fuel in Lepaya shortly before 1 May 1952 and then left for sea about the middle of May for trials. 25X1 the vessel was new, but that she had made trial runs before. 25X1

3. 25X1 the guns on the main turrets could be raised and lowered, independent of one another, to approximately 35 to 40 degrees. The secondary turrets were observed to tilt 10 or 15 degrees. The starboard gun was observed to move up while the center gun moved down. There were small domes over the secondary stationary turrets. 25X1 the main turrets were electrically [illegible] and they operated by electrical tracking. The anti-aircraft guns were also electrically operated and had an electric fuse-setting device. After air raid drills, crew members of the ORDZHONIKIDZE were heard to say that bombs dropped from aircraft would not do any harm because of the deck armor, which the crew thought was very strong. There was no talk, however, as to whether ships of this class, in general, were strongly built;

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however, they looked light. The hull appeared smooth, as if it were welded. The several range finders on the ORDZHONIKIDZE were conspicuously large. Firing was radar-controlled for all guns, and it is believed that the main range-finder was radar, and that every third shot hit its target. This accuracy also applied to antiaircraft guns. The radar equipment was maintained by non-Latvian experts. There was a civilian firm specializing in the maintenance of radar equipment, which employed only Soviets. The employees had to sign a "Secrets Act"; they were not permitted to say that they worked for this firm, which was independent of authority in Latvia. They worked in a separate workshop, which did not belong to the Naval Dockyard, and everything connected with it was highly secret. The quantity of material kept in this workshop was not known, but the workshop was located in a part of one of the warehouses in the Naval Harbor. Radar maintenance work on the ORDZHONIKIDZE was done in May 1952 by these Soviet experts. No information was available on the "diver" which was situated in front of the tower above the wheelhouse. 25X1

4. The SVERDLOV came to Lepaya several times for repairs [redacted] Some welding was done when the ship was in dry dock for repairs, but no detailed information was remembered. The repair was probably not to the seams, because this would certainly have been discussed by the workers. 25X1

Cruisers KIROV and MAKSIM GORKIY

5. The KIROV was most mentioned among sailors in Lepaya. It was last seen in the winter of 1951, but not during 1952. She was not in Lepaya Harbor in March 1952. The MAKSIM GORKIY was in Lepaya prior to November 1952 (sic) for boiler repairs, which were to have been completed by October. She was in the Lepaya area again in March 1952 but was seldom seen in the Outer Harbor; she was at sea most of the time. In February 1952, the MAKSIM GORKIY was seen at anchor 12 to 15 km south of Lepaya, in the company of other ships. [redacted] the ship was fully operational. 25X1

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Destroyers and Smaller Naval Vessels

6. Among the destroyers and smaller naval vessels observed in Lepaya between March and June 1952 were the STROGIY and STROINYY; these were the two largest. When leaving Lepaya, these two vessels had to be towed out to sea, because the mouth of the Naval Harbor Canal was narrow at the harbor. The majority of craft observed in Lepaya were BOs and MTBs. There was a destroyer in the floating dock and another alongside the Naval Dockyard in the summer of 1952; both were larger than the BOs. They had diesel engines and were believed to have come from Kaliningrad (N 54-45, E 20-30), where some Latvians from Lepaya, who had been drafted into the Soviet Navy, were sent to join them. It was thought that the vessels were new, but this was not certain. Although there were differences in structure, these ships were similar in type to the coast guard vessels based at Lepaya. Some MTBs and two former Italian destroyers, belonging to the Coast Guard, flew a green flag. One of these destroyers was believed to be the GRIYEV (sic). They were probably undergoing repairs at that time. They had two turrets and two guns aft, placed side by side. The stern was flat and curved at the end.

Submarines

7. No new submarines were observed at Lepaya. Those which appeared new had been painted. The most impressive were the B-Class submarines, some of which were guard submarines. In May 1952, 41 submarines were observed in Lepaya at one time, six of which were B Class and five S Class. The M-Class submarines were the only ones which frequently put to sea [redacted] B-Class submarines had no guns on the conning tower, but they did have two retractable periscopes. M-Class submarines had at least two forward torpedo tubes, and it took at least two hours to take on one torpedo. 25X1 25X1

[redacted]

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8. One S-Class submarine came to the Lepaya Naval Dockyard for new equipment and overhaul. The flag-navigating officer wanted special automatic steering equipment, which the commander of the submarine said was not available. This equipment was eventually obtained from Baltiysk (N 54-39, E 19-55). Engine and electrical jobs were at the planning stage in the spring of 1952, and minor work of a general nature was being done in the meantime. It was not known how long the overhaul would take. The hull of the ship was not touched, and there was no talk of new batteries being installed. The submarine flew a red flag if the repair was to take over a month.

9. Sailors in Lepaya considered the L-Class submarines the largest; this opinion was not held by all, however. Some believed that the B-Class was larger; the latter did not often put to sea, although the B-28 was seen at a later date in Ventspils (N 57-24, E 21-34).

10. [redacted] no midget submarines at Lepaya, and there was no mention made among employees at the yard of this type of vessel. Latvian sailors serving with the Soviet Navy spoke of some submarines having retractable snorkels. Soviet sailors never mentioned snorkels, and it is not known whether this term was actually used. The speed of submarines was never discussed among sailors. Shch submarines were observed in the Naval Harbor in the spring of 1952. A Shch-Class vessel was alongside the submarine tender KOMMUNA in the fall of 1952. There were three other submarines with three letters painted on their conning towers. The hydroplane, fitting into a recess, was always observed close to the water line. [redacted] the hydroplanes worked up and down or on a swivel. There were no submarine shelters in Lepaya.

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11. It is difficult to determine whether all the submarines at Lepaya were fully manned, since most of the ships' crews lived in naval barracks in the Submarine Division while their ships were in port. The sailors on the submarines were anxious to get to sea; they felt they did not get to sea enough. Leave regulations were strict, because sailors often became drunk when they went ashore. Shore leave was granted only on Sundays, and sailors could only remain on shore until midnight. Men with long service were exempt from this rule. The food and pay on the submarines were good. A sailor second-rank was paid 500 rubles a month. Rated men were generally satisfied with conditions.

Submarine Tender SMOLNYY

12. Mines were not stored on the SMOLNYY but arrived by barge. Submarines also came alongside the ship to take on torpedoes. They never had the engines running while alongside the SMOLNYY. The ship had the usual magnetic compass and a central gyro-compass with repeaters. The central mechanism of the gyro-compass was believed to be a German-English type, [redacted] It was customary for ships to go to sea for compass corrections after degaussing, but this was not done by the SMOLNYY. The discipline on the ship was lax; subordinates argued with officers constantly. The political officer was the "good father" to whom sailors would go after receiving punishment. Trainee helmsmen had to polish brass on the deck and attend classes in helmsmanship.

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Torpedoes and Mines

13. [redacted] torpedoes were stored in two warehouses located between the Winter Harbor and the New Harbor. There was no torpedo workshop or warehouse in the Naval Harbor. Torpedoes arrived on board the SMOLNYY by barge and were lowered into the hold. No work was done on the torpedoes on the deck of the ship; the work was done in the holds. No electric motors for driving torpedoes were observed on the SMOLNYY. Practice torpedoes were painted red; [redacted] The shape of mines observed on board the SMOLNYY was very much like that of a round-nose shell. The outside of the single brass tail attachment was painted green, and the inside was white. Mines observed were numbered one to eight.

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Minesweepers

14. Minesweepers were observed patrolling the sea in groups of three or four. Fishermen were not allowed to approach minesweepers, but the sweepers were observed to have a white wake as from a trawling wire. The minesweepers had paravanes and large reels of cable stored on their decks. Floats stored behind the stack were observed on some minesweepers. No floats were observed from the bow of a minesweeper. A wooden, table-like device, four or five m long, with cutters and knives at the sides, was said to have been used in locating mines. Electric batteries for use in minesweeping were not observed. The only batteries were those for use in submarines, which were charged in a workshop at the Naval Harbor. Equipment for making a noise under water by minesweepers was not observed.

Minefields and Harbor Defenses

15. There were supposed to be no minefields outside Lepaya, but fishermen frequently picked up mines in their trawls. Buoys were used to mark practice minefields. These areas covered a few miles and were not observed in fishing areas. Should a fishing boat find a mine, the spot had to be marked with a marker buoy, and fishing was not permitted until a sweep had been made. Nets for blocking the entrance to the harbor were never observed from shore, but chains attached to drums were seen. These were later removed. the entrance was closed because of an alarm, which lasted between August and September. These drums and chains were later stored between the two road bridges in the Merchant Harbor Canal. The pilot vessel closed the harbor. Fishermen were instructed to come in by the Northern Gate if necessary in bad weather, so it was thought that this was kept clear. The Northern Gate could not be used under normal conditions. The Southern Gate was believed to be blocked by drums and chains. A concrete tower, with a searchlight and a large bell, was located at the southern end of the Central Gate.

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MTBs

16. MTBs observed in Lepaya were of an older type. They resembled the ex-German E-boats which had shielded torpedo tubes. These vessels flew the green flag of the Border Guard. Twelve ex-German MTBs arrived in Lepaya from Leningrad (N 59-55, E 30-20) during the summer of 1950. The vessels arrived with civilian crews under the red flag and stayed in Lepaya for two or three months. They made frequent trial runs at sea. An accident revealed that their sterns were made of plywood. These boats were believed to be extremely fast. The engine made an explosive sound when it was started. these were gasoline engines because the noise of the engine revolution was too high to be that of a diesel. Nothing similar to the hydroplane class was observed along the Latvian coast (sic).

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Target Ship TsEL

17. The radio-controlled target ship TsEL was observed in the Naval Harbor in the spring of 1952 but left Lepaya before May 1952. The ship looked as if it had been shelled. The Soviets were known to be trying to find somebody who could diagram the electrical control of the TsEL. Certain documents were obtained through diplomatic channels, but some essential drawings were still missing. There was no information on the vessel VYSTREL.

Degaussing

18. The submarine tender SMOLNYY had no degaussing equipment. She was towed to a certain place in the Naval Harbor Basin to be degaussed. A barge came alongside and put about ten cables around the deck, which were then lowered to the water line of the ship. It is believed that the cable went around the ship two or three times. The one-inch cable, with 1½ inches of insulation, took about two hours to get into position. The current flowed through the cable

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for four to five hours. The SMOLNYY left her moorings at 1400 hours, and she returned around midnight after being degaussed. The cable had to be moved up and down the ship's side on ropes from the deck; and, when the current flowed through it, it became very heavy. The current was on all the time, and technicians came on board with instruments for measuring. The electric current probably came from a generator on the barge which brought the cable alongside; the cable was connected to boxes on the stern of the barge. No generator was heard, however, on the barge. The amperage in the cable was not known. The start of degaussing was measured by 0 on the meter on board the SMOLNYY. A pump, like a bicycle pump, with fairly long rubber tubing, pumped gas. 25X1
. A seaman from the barge said he was 25X1
measuring the start of magnetism. The pump only worked at the start, but the seaman was kept there all the time, though pumping was not observed at a later stage. there was a place in Lepaya Harbor where a vessel 25X1
could place its nose against the quay and be degaussed in one hour. Every vessel had to be degaussed at least once a month, or after being in port for a long period. Nothing was known of submarines being degaussed. Some naval vessels had MS degaussing cables in permanent position. 25X1
The Naval Shipyard built switchboards and 25X1
cables for degaussing and carried out MS equipment repairs. Testing of MS equipment was thought to be done by instruments on board the ship.

Radar and Radio

19. Streamlined, retractable, sonar-like devices like those carried on the decks of MOs were being fitted below the water line on submarines. 25X1
they came out sideways on the side, near the lowest point of the ship. They were only observed from the side and at a distance. They were installed in the spring of 1952.

20. Direction-finder loops about 40 cm high on B-Class submarines consisted of two loops at right angles. The loop, with its 20 to 30 cm base, was located at the highest point on the submarine, in front of the turret. A rod protruded slightly at the middle.

21. Most antennas observed consisted of a single wire, going over the conning tower from fore to aft. Antennas 25X1
resembling Type 291 were not observed. Antennas similar to FuMO 24 were observed on Border Guard vessels. Border Guard vessels were the first to carry spherical-type antennas; these were later replaced by a type similar to FuMO 24. An antenna similar to the IFF weather-vane type was observed, and the ski-pole type was also seen. Radar antennas resembling Type SG were not observed, although some similar to Type SC with the mast tilted back had been observed on MTBs. The mast was not placed in front of the gun. Wire mesh-type antennas were observed on the ORDZHONIKIDZE. Antennas resembling Type 285 may have been observed on the mast of the ORDZHONIKIDZE. The submarine tender SMOLNYY had a rod antenna and a big overhead antenna between the masts; it did not have radar. The submarine tender POLYARNAYA ZVEZDA had a network-type radar frame. Only MTBs had a radar dome. Officers and men of the vessels had difficulty in maintaining electronic equipment, and they could not make repairs. Higher rank officers knew less. The experts were usually sergeants or corporals who had recently left technical school. There was a radar installation of an unknown type on the former civilian airfield at Lepaya.

General

22. There did not appear to be a definite rule as to voltage on the vessels. The larger vessels usually had 220 v and smaller vessels 110 v. Large ships sometimes had 110 v.

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23. Nothing was known of reserve ships in Lepaya. Reserve sailors were called and served their time either on shore or on board ship.

24. Standards in the Soviet Navy were not very high. There was general excitement when the SMOLNYY went to be degaussed, and the admiral himself had to give the orders. The general impression was that seamanship was poor.

25. Rear Admiral Abramov (fnu) was believed to be in command of the Submarine Division at Lepaya Naval Harbor. Captain First Rank Razanov (fnu), a Georgian, was in charge of the SMOLNYY.

26. [redacted] 25X1

27. There were no new buildings under construction at the Lepaya Shipyard; however, continuous reconstruction did take place.

Kaliningrad

28. A fishing vessel was commissioned at the Flour Mill's quay (sic) at Kaliningrad between October and December 1951. The Schichau Shipyard was not in operation at that time. The yard was overgrown and the piers appeared to have fallen in. Compass corrections of the fishing boats were carried out in the vicinity of the Schichau Shipyard, and the general impression was that the entire area was idle. On one occasion, a Soviet minesweeper was observed at one of the piers, and one of the cranes was in use. There were no cranes along the opposite bank.

Ventspils

29. Two or three submarines were observed in Ventspils in one month in early winter of 1952. One of the submarines was the R-28. BOs were also observed. MTBs were said to have a small harbor at Ventspils, but none were observed. Close observation of the shore south of Ventspils revealed only forests and dunes; there were no large concrete buildings there.

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